

Abstract

1 A technique for providing telecommunications service is disclosed that uses a test bus to test
2 customer subscriber lines and to provide a connection between a customer subscriber line and
3 transmission equipment, which handles outbound backup calls. This backup transmission equipment
4 can be inexpensively retrofitted into switches and remote terminal equipment in the field. The
5 illustrative embodiment of the present invention comprises: a plurality of customer subscriber lines; a
6 metallic test bus that can be electrically connected to any of the plurality of customer subscriber lines;
7 drop test logic for testing at least one electrical characteristic of any of the plurality of customer
8 subscriber lines via the metallic test bus; and transmission equipment for providing
9 telecommunications service to any of the plurality of customer subscriber lines via the metallic test
10 bus.